



## Family Ties

**Editorial** By Pete Scisco

My great grandfather's personal journals and letters came to me by way of a favorite aunt several years ago. It was the first sign that I had been drafted as the family historian. I had the right qualifications—a knack for research and an appreciation for history's personal narratives. The only thing I didn't have was the ability to take my family tree work with me, unless I dragged along my laptop. So recently I started checking out genealogy helpers available for Palm OS handhelds.

Tapperware's [My Roots 2.0](#) (shareware; \$19.95) is a real boost to family tree hobbyists. It imports and exports information in GEDCOM format, which most popular personal-computer-based genealogy programs support. The program can display descendant and ancestor trees, you can get to relatives with just a couple of taps, and many of the fields will auto-fill. The date field won't bring up the Palm OS calendar, which is too bad, but at least there's room to add notes. It supports color, memory expansion cards, and the Palm Portable Keyboard. This app uses 88K of memory. A Windows (there's no Macintosh version) conversion utility is available for transferring data back and forth from your Palm OS device to your PC.

[GedStar 4.3](#) (from GHCS Software; shareware; \$11.95) supports GEDCOM 5.5, which makes it another good choice if you want to take your family history files with you on your handheld. Unlike My Roots, GedStar is designed as a display-only applica-

tion. The Windows (no Mac) compatible desktop component converts your family tree data and downloads it to your Palm, but doesn't give you editing capability. Even so, the different views of and easy access to your data make it extremely useful as you carry out your research, and it's convenient for sharing your information. The source note field will help you verify your research with family members or others genealogists. You can even export reports to the Memo Pad. File storage is very compact, allowing you to keep thousands of individuals in a single file. The program uses 72KB of memory.

A similar program called [GedWise 3.0](#) (Battery Park Software; shareware; \$17.99) also give you a way to carry family history files created on your desktop computer (again on Windows, not Mac) on your Palm if your genealogy software lets you create GEDCOM 5.5 files. It can produce and display ancestry and descendant charts, provides excellent sorting and search tools, and will export records to Memo Pad or beam them to another user. It needs 98K of RAM and Palm OS 3.3 or later to run.

If you're a [ThinkDB](#) database users, [HandyTree](#) (Arkansoft; shareware; \$11.95) lets you edit family history data on your handheld. The program will export into several formats, but not GEDCOM.

Uncovering personal histories and making links to the past can also be a fascinating and rewarding hobby. Use these programs and many others to set your Palm's wayback machine.

### Edit Event

Name: Harold Gantnier

Event: Marriage

Date: ▼ On 09 / 22 / 1949

Location: New Canaan, CT

Spouse: Bertha Sleeper

Done

## Review Chain Reaction 1.1

Shareware; \$10. [BapSoft](#)

There is just something about pattern-based puzzle games. One theory behind their popularity might be that these kinds of games push all of the right evolutionary buttons: humans are hardwired to see patterns and to make connections as a way to make meaning out of the world in front of them. So when a game like this gives us a chance to flex our meaning-making muscles, we give it an innocent 10 minutes and end up losing ten weeks.

The rules of this Bejeweled-like game satisfy the first mandate of arcade puzzle

gaming—keep it simple and make it fun. Just arrange the objects on the screen to create sets of three, which are then cleared from the screen. Arrange several sets horizontally or vertically, so that you can set off the "chain reaction" and improve your score. As you progress through the levels you get fewer moves in which to clear the screen. You can save your game and return.

Chain Reaction provides plenty of mindful yet mindless entertainment. It supports color and monochrome models. -- PS



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## News

### Treo Mail Beta

Treo owners can sign up for Handspring's beta program for Treo Mail, which delivers e-mail from your business or personal e-mail account (just one account) to your Treo. Charges for airtime are set by your wireless provider; Handspring charges, which haven't been formalized, are waived during the beta period. Hurry to the Handspring web site if you want to sign up for the trial because the beta window is closing soon.

## New Products

### PiBackup II 1.15

For Palm OS handheld owners with the latest models using external memory cards, a backup utility like this is an essential tool for safeguarding critical personal and business information. It's a VFS compatible software solution that allows multiple users to backup to a single memory card. Specific files can be selected for storage, and backups can be scheduled to run at specific times. Requires Palm OS 4.0 or later on a PDA with VFS and memory expansion card capability or any Palm OS device with VFS-compatible software (for example, Clie, Palm, or TRG Pro). Shareware; \$14.95 [Download demo from Portable Innovation Technology](#).

### RecipeEase 1.0

Palm OS recipe programs keep popping up like toaster pastries. This simple recipe keeper tracks categories (desserts, for example) ingredients, source (is this dish something your granddaddy packed for your fishing trips?), and the measurements you need to pull it all together. It's not as robust as other recipe keepers—just all you need to keep favorite dishes in a handy place. Shareware; \$3.95. [Download PalmGear demo](#).

### BooksEtc

After a good meal it's pleasant to spend some time reading a favorite book or perusing a new one. Book lovers can use this program to keep track of the books they've read and want to read. There's room for you to make a few notes and to record author names. Needs 69K of RAM and Palm OS 3.0 or later. Shareware; \$5. [Download PalmGear demo](#).

